Fresh Tech Skills Smac the Old World

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NEHA ALAWADHI & VARUN SOOD
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New technology skills are taking centre stage and others are fading out as companies shift to a world in which social media, mobility, data analytics and cloud computing (known by the acronym Smac) begin to dominate enterprise and consumer applications.

Specific platforms and technologies are commanding a premium, and so are soft skills including the ability to articulate the big picture, recruiters and employers are saying. For example, engineers with 2-3 years' experience in big data platform Hadoop or mobile applications can command up to 30% higher salaries than those with legacy skills like Cobol or Visual Basic.

"Some key skills which are very crucial for an employee these days are the ability to communicate disruptive ideas, multi-disciplinary skills with appropriate depth of specialisation, learnability and resilience," said Prithvi Shergill, chief human resources officer, HCL Technologies, the country's fifth-largest technology company.

So, an engineer with 2-3 years' experience working in data analytics can expect a salary of ₹4-6 lakh in India and $70-80,000 in the US or Europe. But without big data skills, the same engineer can earn only ₹3-5 lakh, according to Anurag Gupta, chief operating officer at Magna Infotech, an IT staffing firm.

Experience of 5-6 years in data analytics can help an engineer command a salary of up to ₹10-12 lakh in the domestic market, according to Kamal Karanth, India MD of staffing firm Kelly Services.

Firms like IPsoft, Happiest Minds and Mu Sigma, operating in automation, mobility and analytics solutions as well as cloud-based deployment are competing in areas that are seeing the fastest

Mastering New Skills

Technologies in demand in IT services

Mobile developers like iOS/Android/Windows

Cloud Computing
Open source tools like Chef, Puppet, MongoDB

Big Data experts (Hadoop, Data Analytics)

Technologies with slowing demand (legacy technologies)

- ERP
- C, C++
- Mainframes, Cobol, PC support
- Quality assurance

growth for country's IT players. Digital technologies contribute 5-10% of the industry's revenue, according to the Nasscom.

New York-based IPsoft, which has a facility at Bangalore, pays employees with proficiency in data analytics up to 20% more than what it pays for engineers with proficiency in just coding. The privately-held company has 1,700 employees across 10 offices globally.

"There are fewer than 50,000 machine-learning scientists in the world today who can make sense of big data science," said Arnab Gupta, founder CEO of Opera Solutions, the New Jersey-based predictive analytics firm. "So obviously, knowledge of these skill sets commands a higher premium as it's a supply-demand thing for now," said Samiran Ghosh, IT Advisory Partner at Ernst & Young. Also seem to be winning in the race are the ones who can work on developing iOS and Android applications and technologies, including in Sharepoint, IT security and open source tools such as Chef, Puppet.